

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance.

Ind. Claims 1, 32, 44

The closest prior art of Outlook (2000) teaches a method for sorting a table of data.

Outlook teaches row or column markers, sort keys and sort order including most significant key. Outlook does not teach, (a) where the selected marker remains within the table of data, (b) an action of maintaining the positions and the sort directions of two or more remaining sort keys in the sort key order, beyond the default sort direction and (c) displaying the sorted table of data including displaying the table of data including the same plurality of rows or the plurality of columns where content of the table of data has been sorted.

Ind. Claims 20, 39, 49, 23, 42, 52, 37, 47, 38, and 48

The closest prior art of Outlook (2000) teaches a method for sorting a table of data.

Outlook teaches row or column markers, sort keys and sort order including most significant key. Outlook does not teach, (a) an action of maintaining the positions and the sort directions of two or more remaining sort keys in the sort key order, beyond the default sort direction and (b) displaying the sorted table of data including displaying the

table of data including the same plurality of rows or the plurality of columns where content of the table of data has been sorted.

Ind. Claims 37 and 47

Applicant's argument with respect to the determination that is performed as to whether a user selected marker is the most significant key or not, is persuasive. Outlook does not teach

determine whether the user-selected marker is associated with the most significant key, and if the user-selected marker is associated with the most significant key, change a sort direction of the most significant key, and if the user-selected marker is not associated with the most significant key, establish the row or column associated with the user-selected marker as the most significant sort key responsive to the user selection of the marker, and maintain the positions and the sort directions of the remaining sort keys in the sort key order.

Dep. Claims 2-19, 21-22, 32-36, 40-41, 45-46, and 50-51

These claims are dependent upon the independent claims: 1, 32, 44, 20, 39, 49, 37, 47, 23, 42, and 52, respectively, and are thus allowable.

Dep. Claims 8 and 9

Claims 8 and 9 were previously rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Outlook in view of Lane, are dependent upon claim 6 which depends on claim 1, and are thus allowable. Lane does not further teach the limitations specifically noted above.

35 USC § 112, 6th

Claims 44-52 have been interpreted under 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph, because they use a non-structural terms, coupled with functional language without reciting sufficient structure to achieve the function. Furthermore, the non-structural term is not preceded by a structural modifier.

Since this claim limitation invokes 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph, claims 44-52 are interpreted to cover the corresponding structure described in the specification that achieves the claimed function, and equivalents thereof.

A review of the specification shows that the following appears to be the corresponding structure described in the specification for the 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph limitation: a computer or multiple computer including processors suitable for execution of a computer program; and CRT or LCD monitor; keyboard and a pointing device. See pages 9-10.

If applicant wishes to provide further explanation or dispute the examiner's interpretation of the corresponding structure, applicant must identify the corresponding structure with reference to the specification by page and line number, and to the drawing, if any, by reference characters in response to this Office action.

If applicant does **not** wish to have the claim limitation treated under 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph, applicant may amend the claim so that it will clearly not invoke 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph, or present a sufficient showing that the claim recites sufficient structure, material, or acts for performing the claimed function to preclude application of 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph.

For more information, see *Supplementary Examination Guidelines for Determining Compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and for Treatment of Related Issues in Patent Applications*, 76 FR 7162, 7167 (Feb. 9, 2011).

Inquiry

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andrew Belousov whose telephone number is (571) 270-1695 and Andrew.belousov@uspto.gov email. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (alternate Fri off) EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Weilun Lo can be reached on (571) 272-4847. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-3800.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Andrey Belousov/
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